[636 cont.]

[764] [766]

[Note on foreign text pp. 652-653 cont.] yellow shoulder-cloth, on the other hand, which a dead person with age-consecration wears, must be burned with the corpse, just like the sash that he received at that time.

this must be done while the corpse is still flexible. Once it is rigid, it maintains its position virtually unchanged.

[171] [735] The death-box. The death-box is made either long before death or not until death has taken place, as among the Chinese where the coffin is sometimes ready decades beforehand. Only poor people do not make the death-box until after the death. The box is always made of wood, but it does not matter what kind of wood it is made of; after all, it is not buried, as is the coffin among the Chinese, but is burned with the dead person. The box has the height of a litter or sedan chair; the dead person fits exactly into it. The bottom of the box extends into four carrying beams, [637] similar to a flat litter. The box [illustration appears here], however is not a simple wooden chest, but represents a small temple with roof and doors and often very rich carving, similar to death-box of the Chinese bonze (6). Unlike the latter, however, it has a sun

[532] [171]

6. [Foreign text p. 653.] in the case of the coffin of the Taoshih the sun-moon attachment, the movable back wall, and the carrying pole are lacking. The corpse is usually put inside through the front door or from above, because the roof piece is removable.

and moon in the center of the roof, similar to the tip of a mani-pole; this is generally regarded as necessary. The box [556] is painted and decorated according to the wealth, piety, and [321] affection of the relatives.

There are no definite ritual prescriptions for the prep-[465] aration of the box. The carpenter receives the usual fee for

[641 cont.]

764 604 537 [273] The mother's brother puts the hada over his shoulders, takes a swallow of liquor, and begins his speech. Usually he demands an accounting concerning the care of his protégé during the latter's illness and demands the small fees for the prayer service, saying that they should be ashamed of such avarice, the dead had always been a good person, the pride of his family, he deserved better; now at least one should give him a decent death-box and provide the most magnificent cremation possible; far too few lamas had been invited, but now they should recompense them with much money and rice and butter, etc.

[273] Every time that the mother's brother puts forward a wish or a complaint and pauses, the master of ceremonies has his liquor bowl refilled and calls upon him to drink. Then the master of ceremonies replies in the name of the paternal relatives, seeks to invalidate the reproaches, to lessen the demands, and to emphasize the efforts of the family. He says that the most expensive medicines were procured for the deceased during his illness, for how could one neglect such a virtuous person; moreover, everything that the family could do in his honor and for his soul would be done, but one should not demand the impossible; after all, one must die sometime; the times are bad, but they would gladly give the lama that and that, etc. -- So it goes back and forth between the mother's brother and the master of ceremonies, until a course is finally agreed upon and the mother's brother declares that now he is satisfied and will release the corpse. Now the mother's brother is invited to inspect the corpse, but he usually does not do this.

764 604 After this speech, the bereaved arise, kowtow three times before the mother's brother, and return to the deathwatch by the box. The mother's brother follows them and kowtows before the dead. Then alms are distributed to the guests, usually [431] coins. This is called "to do good," for it is advantageous for the deceased. Then the meal for the relatives on the mother's side [735] takes place in a large circle. Usually there is rice, but among poor people only noodle soup.

[775] [177] [642] The ceremony of the demand for an accounting has the purpose of releasing the soul of the dead for the migration

[831 cont.]

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[Note on foreign text p. 834 cont.] the other hand, it is done for protection against bad weather, it is also popularly done before the pole-goat.

[562] Persons: As is the case for all religious ceremonies, the women are kept away. The participants are the seed-master, the village elders, and all other men and youths. Any kind of [791] soothsayer may appear on this occasion. It is important that at the actual offering some spirit is always summoned by the soothsayer and supervises the performance. -- Participation is also [784] prohibited to all who are in mourning and in whose compound there is a woman in childbed. -- People with empty utensils, for example, empty water pails, baskets, etc., may not come near. For this reason the gong is beaten before the offering, so that such persons will stay away (2).

[787]

[735]

2. [Foreign text p. 834.] The fear of an encounter with empty utensils is quite general in Tsinghai. It signifies poverty, vain endeavor, etc. Tujen express the wish, for example, before a journey: huodzën sawa bi pëngë, that is, "may an empty vessel not appear." The Chinese, too, have similar expressions.

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Sacrificial animal: As sacrificial animal only a sheep is considered, no goat and especially no pig. The sheep may be of any color and sex, even castrated. It must be at least a year old, however. A sheep that is too young would be an insult to the gods, aside from the fact that the meat would not [621] be sufficient for the participants. Usually the [832] sheep is purchased jointly. Every family must provide grain or money for this purpose; the owner is always given compensation. To be [784] sure, the sheep may not come from a family that is taboo at the time, for instance, through bereavement, childbed, sickness, etc.